
LEATHERMORE:
OR,
A D V I C E
Concerning
GAMING.

Compare 1-18 20

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complet famili

See also Harleian Miscellany
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TO THE T. A.

gaming

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LEATHERMORE:
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Concerning
GAMING.

The Third Edition.

Fælix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.

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*G*AMING is an enchanting Witchery, begot betwixt *Idleness* and *Avarice*; which has this ill Property above all other Vices, that it renders a Man incapable of prosecuting any serious Action, and makes

makes him always unsatisfied with his own Condition: He is either lifted up to the Top of mad Joy with Success; or plung'd to the Bottom of Despair by Misfortune; always in Extreams, always in a Storm.

Hannibal said of Marcellus, that Fortunam nec bonam nec malam ferre potest, he could be quiet, neither Conqueror nor Conquered. Thus (such is the Itch of Play) Gamesters, neither Winning nor Losing, can rest satisfied: If they Win, they think to Win more; if they Lose, they hope to Recover.

One propounded this Question, Whether Men in Ships at Sea were to be accounted among the Living or the Dead, because there were but few Inches betwixt them and Drown-

Drowning? The same Query may be made of great Gamesters, tho' their Estates be never so considerable, Whether they are to be esteemed Poor or Rich, since there are but a few Casts at Dice betwixt a Person of Fortune (in that Circumstance) and a Beggar?

But Speculation in this Particular will not be convincing, unless we shew somewhat of the modern Practice: We must therefore lay our Scene at the *Ordinary*, and proceed to our *Action*.

Betwixt Twelve and One of the Clock a good Dinner is prepar'd by way of Ordinary; and some Gentlemen of Civility and Condition oft-times eat there, and play a-while for Recreation after Dinner, both moderately, and most com-

commonly without deserving Re-
proof.

Towards Night, when ravenous Beasts usually seek their Prey, there comes in Shoals of *Hectors*, *Trapanners*, *Guilts*, *Pads*, *Biters*, *Prigs*, *Divers*, *Lifters*, *Kid-nappers*, *Vouchers*, *Mill-kens*, *Pymen*, *Decoys*, *Shoplifters*, *Foilers*, *Bulkers*, *Droppers*, *Famblers*, *Donmakers*, *Crosbiters*, &c. under the general Appellation of *Rooks*: And in this Particular it serves as a Nursery for *Tyburn*; for every Year some of this Gang march thither: One *Millard* was Hang'd in *April 1664*, for Burglary; and others since.

When a young Gentleman, or Prentice, comes into this School of Vertue, unskill'd in the Quibbles and Devices there practised, they

they call him a *Lamb*; then a *Rook* (who is properly the *Wolf*) follows him close, and engages him in advantageous Bets, and at length worries him, that is, gets all his Money ; and then they smile, and say, *The Lamb is bitten.*

Of these *Rooks*, some will be very importunate to borrow Money of you, without any Intention of Repaying ; or to go with you 7 to 12, half a Crown, and take it ill if they are refused ; others watch, if, when you are serious at your Game, your Sword hang loose behind, and lift that away ; others will not scruple, if they spy an Opportunity, directly to pick your Pocket ; yet if all fail, some will nim off the Gold Buttons of your Cloak, or steal the Cloak it self if it lie loose ; others

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will throw at a Sum of Money with a *dry Fist* (as they call it) that is, if they nick you 'tis theirs, if they lose they owe you so much, with many other Quillets; or if you chance to nick them, 'tis odds they wait your coming out at Night, and beat you, as one *Cock* was served in *June 1664.*

Blaspheming, Drunkenness, and Swearing, are here so familiar, that Civility is, by the Rule of Contraries, accounted a Vice: I do not mean Swearing when there is Occasion to attest a Truth, but upon no Occasion, or rather all Occasions; as, *God damn me, how dost? What a Clock is it by God? &c.* Then before two Hours are at an end, some one who has been heated with Wine, or made choleric with the Loss of his Money, raises

raises a Quarrel, Swords are drawn, and perhaps the Boxes and Candlesticks thrown at one another, and all the House in a Garboyle, forming a perfect Type of Hell.

Wou'd you imagine it to be true, that a grave Gentleman well stricken in Years, insomuch as he cannot see the Pips of the Dice, is so infatuated with this Witchery, as to play here with others Eyes, of whom this Quibble was rais'd, *I bat Mr. — such a one plays at Dice by the Ear.* Another Gentleman stark blind, I have seen play at Hazard; and sure that must be by the Ear too.

Late at Night, when the Company grows thin, and your Eyes dim with watching, false Dice are often put upon the Ignorant, or

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they are otherwise cozened with Topping, or Slurring, &c. And if you be not vigilant, the Box-keeper shall score you up double or treble Boxes; and, though you have lost your Money, dun you as severely for it, as if it were the justest Debt in the World.

There are yet some genteeler and more subtle *Rooks*, whom you shall not distinguish by their outward Demeanour from Persons of Condition; and who will sit by a whole Evening, and observe who wins: and then, if the Winner be bubbleable, they will insinuate themselves into his Acquaintance, and civilly invite him to drink a Glass of Wine, wheadle him into Play, and win all his Money, either by false Dice, as high Fullams, low Fullams, 5, 4, 2 Shillings, &c. or

or by Palming, Topping, Knapping, or Slurring ; or, in case he be past that Classis of Ignoramusses, then by Crosbiting, or some other Dexterity, of which they have variety unimaginable. Note by the way, That when they have you at the Tavern, and think you a sure *Bubble*, they will many times purposely lose some small Sum to you the first time, to engage you more freely to Bleed (as they call it) at the second Meeting, to which they will be sure to invite you.

A Gentleman whom ill Fortune had hurried into Passion, took a Box and Dice to a Side-Table, and there fell to throwing by himself, at length swears with an Emphasis, *--- Damn me ! now I throw for Nothing I can win a thousand Pounds ; but when I play for Money, I lose my Arse.* If

If the House find you free to the Box, and a constant Caster you shall be treated below with Suppers at Night, and Cawdle in the Morning, and have the Honour to be stiled *A Love of the House* whilst your Money lasts, which certainly will not be long; for, as the *Lamiae* destroy'd Men under pretence of Kindness, so 'tis here.

In a word, this Course of Life shall afford you so many Affronts, and such a number of Vexations, as shall in time convert both your Soul and Body into *Anguish*; and *Anguish* in some has turn'd to *Madness*. Thus one *Bull*, a young Fellow, not many Years since, had by strange Fortune run up a very small Sum to 1500 Pounds, and put himself into a Garb accordingly, could not give over, play'd on, Fortune

Fortune turn'd, lost it all, run mad,
and so died.

If what has been said will not make you detest this abominable kind of Life, will the almost certain Loss of your Money do it ? I'll undertake to demonstrate, that 'tis Ten to One you shall be a Loser at the Year's end with constant Play upon the Square. — If then twenty Persons bring two hundred Pounds a-piece, which makes four thousand Pounds, and resolve to play, for Example, three or four Hours a Day for a Year ; I'll wager, the Box shall have fifteen hundred Pounds of the Money, and that eighteen of the twenty Persons shall be Losers.

I have seen (in a lower Instance)
three Persons sit down at Twelve-
penny

penny *Inn* and *Inn*, and each draw forty Shillings a-piece; and in little more than two Hours the Box has had three Pounds of the Money, and all the three Gamesters have been Losers, and laugh'd at for their Indiscretion.

At an *Ordinary* you shall scarce have a Night pass without a Quarrel; and you must either tamely put up an Affront, or else be engag'd in a Duel next Morning, upon some trifling insignificant Occasion, pretended to be a Point of Honour.

Most Gamesters begin at small Game; and by degrees, if their Money or Estates hold out, they rise to great Sums: Some have play'd first all their Money, then their Rings, Coach and Horses, even

ven their wearing Cloaths and Pe-
riwigs, and then such a Farm, and
at last perhaps a Lordship. You
may reade in our Histories how Sir Miles Partridge play'd at Dice with King Henry VIIIth for *Jesus Bells*, so called, which were the greatest in *England*, and hung in a Tower of *St. Paul's* Church, and won them; whereby he brought them to ring in his Pocket: But the Ropes afterwards catch'd about his Neck; for in *Edward the VIth*'s Days he was Hang'd for some criminal Offences.

Consider how many Persons have been ruin'd by Play: Sir Arthur Smithouse is yet fresh in Memory: He had a fair Estate, which in a few Years he so lost at Play, that he died in great Want and Penury. Since that, Mr. Ba— who was a

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Clerk in the Six-Clerks Office, and well cliented, fell to Play, won by extraordinary Fortune two thousand Pieces in ready Gold; was not content with that, play'd on, lost all he had won, and almost all his own Estate, sold his Place in the Office, and at last marched off to a foreign Plantation, to begin a new World with the Sweat of his Brow: For that is commonly the Destiny of a decayed Gamester, either to go to some foreign Plantation, or to be preferr'd to the Dignity of a Box-keeper.

It is not deny'd but most Gamesters have at one time or other a considerable Run of Winning; but (such is the Infatuation of Play) I could never hear of the Man that gave over a Winner, (I mean to give over, as never to play again);
I am

I am sure 'tis *rara avis*: For if you once break Bulk (as they phrase it) you are in again for all. Sir *Humphry Foster* had lost the greatest part of his Estate, and then playing, as 'tis said, for a dead Horse, did by happy Fortune recover it again, then gave over, and wisely too.

If a Man have a competent Estate of his own, and plays whether himself or another Man shall have it, 'tis extreme Folly: If his Estate be small, then to hazard the Loss even of that, and reduce himself to absolute Beggery, is direct Madness. Besides, it has been generally observ'd, that the Loss of one hundred Pounds shall do you more Prejudice, in disquieting your Mind, than the Gain of two hundred Pounds shall do you Good, were you sure to keep it.

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Consider also your Loss of Time, which is invaluable ; and remember what *Seneca* says — *Nulla major est jactura, quam temporis amissio.*

Lastly, Consider the great Damage the very Watching brings to your Health, and in particular to your Eyes, (for Gamesters work most by Night) confirm'd by this Distich,

*Allia, vina, venus, fumus, faba, lumen & ignis,
Ista nocent oculis, sed vigilare magis.*

F I N I S.



A

Penitent Sonnet,

Written by the

Lord *FITZ-GIRALD,*

(A great Gamester)

A little before his **D E A T H,**
which was in the Year 1580.

By Loss in Play Men oft forget
The Duty they do owe
To him that did bestow the same,
And thousand Millions moe.

I loath to hear them swear and stare
When they the Main have lost,
Forgetting all the Byes that were
With God and Holy Ghost.

By

By Wounds and Nayles they think to win,
 But truly it is not so;
 For all their Frets and Fumes in Sin,
 They Moneyless must go.
 There is no Wight that us'd it more
 Than he that wrote this Verse,
 Who cries Peccavi now therefore,
 His Oaths his Heart do pierce.
 Therefore Example take by me,
 That curse the luckless time
 That ever Dice mine Eyes did see,
 Which bred in me this Crime.
 Pardon me for that is past,
 I will offend no more,
 In this most vile and sinful cast,
 Which I will still abhor.

FINIS.



